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Dordt College

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Academic Progress Fund Initiated

Central Board Takes Unanimous Action

Aims To Achieve Scholastic Distinction

The Central Board of Dordt College at its recent meeting in February adopted the proposal of the Executive Board, originated in the Finance Committee, to set up an Academic Progress Fund.

Eligibility For Membership

This special fund is to supplement the faculty and curriculum expansion program. Central Board members are to play the main role in gaining membership for the Academic Progress Fund. Membership can be obtained through a special, annual contribution of \$25.00, \$50.00, or \$100.00 (or more). It is to be understood that members of the group will contribute this sum in addition to their regular gifts through quotas, offerings, and Foundation Day Drive. While it is hoped that members will make this an annual commitment, no member is bound or obligated to do so if his circumstances or desire do not recommend doing so.

Procedure Proposed

Central Board members are to make personal contacts in their district or submit candidates' names to the Finance Committee. The Board members are prepared to explain the program to those interested. Once the names are in the possession of the Finance Committee, proper negotiations, information, and card membership will be processed. Members will be regularly informed on all matters concerning the amount and use of the monies in this fund.

Naturally it will be impossible for Board members to contact or be in a position to recommend all the individuals who might be interested in this program. Therefore those not contacted are asked to send their names to the Finance Committee, Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa.

A Vital Matter

For five years the Executive Board and Finance Committee have struggled with the problem of setting up this type of income. Anyone acquainted with college matters realizes that, to maintain a high calibre of academic life, demands a type of faculty and curriculum benefits which cannot be enjoyed without special assistance financially. All our people are eager to have a good college, with emphasis on "good." We want a college that appeals to our youth, gains the praise of accrediting bodies, and meets the demands of our Calvinistic concept of higher education. The Academic Progress Fund aims to gain that "extra" which is actually indispensable to a commendable school.

Appeal to "Outsider"

No doubt there are several individuals throughout our denomination who can be appealed to by this program. We know of some who have given to Dordt College regularly and are interested in our development. Plans are in progress to reach a sizeable group of these.

Dordt Presents Film

The film *THE LIVING DESERT* will be shown in the college auditorium on Thursday evening, March 10, at 7:30 o'clock. In this film, Walt Disney brings to the screen the mysteries, the beauty, the stark reality of the Great American Desert. Here is a drama as old as time—where nature sets the scene and provides the actors. You will meet the inhabitants of this strangely beautiful land and share the excitement of their struggle for existence. The red-tailed hawk, enemy of the rattler; the mating dance of the scorpion; exciting games of the kangaroo rat; the curious roadrunners; the tiny elf owl and countless other desert creatures are captured in color in this Academy Award winning epic. Admission—25c.

Dordt Days At Prinsburg and Edgerton, Minn.

Districts 2 and 3 To Hold Annual Meetings

Rev. J. B. Hulst Main Speaker At Evening Meetings

On Tuesday, March 8, at Prinsburg and Friday, March 11 at Edgerton, the annual Dordt Day is to be held.

The first Dordt Day was held in Parkersburg, Iowa, and proved to be very successful. The aim of these days is to provide opportunity annually in each district for representatives of the college to meet the Ministers, Central Board members, and senior high school students in the afternoon.

In the evening the annual district meeting will be held. Rev. J. B. Hulst of Orange City will deliver an address. Musical selections will be presented by the college. The regular business of the society will also be taken care of at this meeting.

The Executive Board believes that the "Dordt Day" plan will be a permanent and effective way to accomplish many things. It will serve to make the district meetings more meaningful and successful; it will give the ministers, board members, and college representatives a good opportunity to discuss college matters; it will afford means for prospective students to become thoroughly acquainted with the course offerings and campus activities at Dordt College.

Plans are also underway to hold Dordt Day meetings in the other districts.

Guest Editorial

... BY C. HUISSEN

INTELLECTUAL BANKRUPTCY

Dr. Charles F. Spencer, president of East Central college of Ada, Oklahoma, addressed a meeting of state legislators and citizens. We quote: "Some students come to college without being able to read above the fifth grade level. I believe college is not a place to teach people to read and write."

"As long as colleges take anyone who graduates from high school there's no reason for the high school to improve."

"I wouldn't ever say to a boy or girl, 'You can't go to college.' But I would say, 'You can't go to college until you learn to read or write.' If we would say that, our high schools would get busy."

We all remember how jittery we became when the first sputnik was sent aloft. At once we recognized the weaknesses in our educational system. How about our colleges and high schools? This writer has heard some similar complaints from our own college professors. Indeed, one might ask whether our colleges even teach people how to read or write. One of the sermon critics at our last Synod reported that some of these written sermons were sloppy, gave evidence of slovenliness, some contained many grammatical errors, and even spelling mistakes.

It may not be amiss to mark the road that leads to, if not intellectual bankruptcy, certainly to intellectual stagnation. And that we are on that road, the burden of this article will attempt to prove. But we do not wish to limit it to the purely academic community.

Beginning with our young people, here are a number of factors at work which are nothing short of deadly for intellectual development, specifically in the area of the doctrines of our church. The sports craze, the

very busy schedule of school activities, basketball games, etc. are playing havoc with our catechism classes. And the churches surrender their priority and prestige by accommodating and capitulating to the school program. Moreover, it may be questioned whether our catechism teaching is as thorough as it once was. A former bible teacher in the Grand Rapids Christian High School never hesitated to declare that the students trained in the Protestant Reformed churches were much better founded in Reformed Doctrine than ours. What accounts for the difference? Does it seem unreasonable to believe that we have capitulated to the nonsense of many educators that children should not be compelled to memorize anything they do not understand, and that memorization generally is devaluated?

Another factor that enters into the picture is a sort of an anomaly. Generally, our young people make profession of faith at a much earlier age than a previous generation. For that we are grateful. But that is usually the end of all catechetical training, and that is most regrettable. And we have no substitute that will compensate for this loss. Moreover, young people attend catechism classes but baptized members twenty or over consider themselves "too old" to attend.

Then, too, our young people marry at a much younger age than was formerly done. Look at a picture of a young men's society of thirty or forty years ago. Half of the men on the picture are fully matured men, in their mid-twenties or so. Those societies were excellent training schools for future elders and deacons. Today these societies are largely obsolete, or fast becoming so. How many churches right here in our own territory still have an active young men's society? Very few. The sports craze, youthful confessions, youthful marriages, but also a large dose of indifference is stifling and stagnating the intellectual development of our coming generation.

It does not require a prophet to foresee that this will have a debilitating effect upon the power of the pulpit. Preachers will soon hear that they are preaching over the heads of their people. And preachers, being human, may soon succumb to the demands for more "practical" or "evangelistic" sermons. Preachers must be "popular" with the young people at all costs. Catechism preaching already is assailed by not a few. And it may be questioned whether the Catechism would be

faithfully preached if the synodical directives were withdrawn. Do some of our younger ministers themselves chafe just a little under the compulsion of catechism preaching? And is our present day preaching, under the guise of being "practical" in danger of becoming nothing more than moralizing. Judging by some of the classical sermons of candidates in recent years, this writer is convinced that this danger is more than imaginary; certainly not altogether groundless.

Coming to the higher echelons of the educated community, we like to make a few observations. We may thankfully record that we have a community of scholars of the highest rank. In three colleges we have faculties that stand second to none in the U.S. To all of them we pay our highest tribute. We have the Ph. D's by the dozen. Maybe we are becoming degree happy. We have a coterie of scholars in our schools, our principals and teachers. We may at least assume that our clergy are devoted to scholarship.

However, when we look at our scholarly productions in the field of theology, science and literature, the results are less than overwhelming. We give full recognition for what has been produced. It is telling that the monumental work in theology that is ours was written by a man who did not hold a doctorate. For this lack of productivity we have both reasons and excuses. But we seem to become enamored with size; we are beginning to make a lot of noise about massiveness. Very soon Calvin College will have an enrollment of three thousand students! That is dinned into our ears.

But will you sit down with me for a moment and consider the sobering fact that we do not have one, and I mean one, truly scientific journal to air our views of the calvinistic intelligentsia to the world? We had a beginning in the *Calvin Forum*. It died. Today we have the *Reformed Journal* and *Torch and Trumpet*, neither of which are, nor were ever meant to be strictly scientific journals. The Free University has a *Philosophia Reformata*; Westminster Seminary, so lightly esteemed by some of our intelligentsia, has a *Theological Journal*. And a respectable production it is. But we? Nix.

Let not the sentiments here expressed be construed as a belittling of our accomplishments. We are deeply grateful for what we have. We love our church and all her educational institutions. But unless the trend here indicated is reversed, we are on the road to intellectual stagnation and bankruptcy. Then the days of an aggressive, virile and militant Christian Reformed Church are numbered. May God forbid.

The
DORDT
COLLEGE

Voice

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Editorial Committee

Rev. B. J. Haan, Editor
Rev. Milton Doornbos, Rev. John
Hulst, Rev. Leonard Bossenbroek,
Douglas Ribbens.

From The PRESIDENT'S PEN

We are happy to learn, after two issues of *The Voice* under the new arrangement, that several people are reading the column "From the President's Pen." Not all the comments received are favorable. Objection has been raised to our references to Calvin College. It is contended that these allusions are in part contrary to fact, basically out of context, leaving a false impression, and quite unnecessary in establishing the point in the discussion. There is, of course, the possibility that some, perhaps all, of these charges can be substantiated. We welcome supporting evidence for these criticisms and will gladly give our readers the benefit of them.

It ought to be clearly understood that in our opinion Calvin College merits high respect among our constituency. Calvin, academically, needs no defense and what we have written was not intended to undermine confidence in her scholastic prominence, which is nationally recognized. The point we are seeking to establish is that smallness is not synonymous with academic inferiority and that bigness does not neces-

sarily enhance scholastic respectability. We also contend that there are distinct advantages associated with smaller colleges which tend to be lost in larger colleges.

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THE CASE FOR SMALL COLLEGES

Last month we quoted from an article by D. Elton Trueblood "Why I Chose a Small College." Trueblood is now teaching at Earlham College, Richmond, Ind., which has an enrollment of approximately 700 students. Previously he taught at Stanford and Harvard, very large universities.

In answer to the question, "What is there in the pattern of small-college life that produces such results and holds such promise for our future?" he gives three answers. "First is the affectionate, abiding concern for the individual." His second answer he summarizes as follows: "... Every student has the opportunity to find and engage in those activities which will develop his maximum capacities."

But it is the third answer which

should appeal to our constituency. "The third and to me most important advantage of the small college is its concern, rooted in religion, for character development. I know that in many large universities there are strong religious courses, active religious programs, and beautiful places of worship. But in institutions which number their students by the thousands the great majority are reached only occasionally by these influences. I chose a small college because I wanted to be part of a life where this character-developing influence is pervasive, where it is shared by all the students and promoted not only by professors of Bible and religion but quite as much by men in chemistry, biology, and psychology."

These observations, while not detracting from the excellent work being done at Calvin College, when complimented by other considerations which we plan to discuss, certainly lend strength to the argument favoring more colleges within our denomination.

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From The DEAN'S DESK

In studying the history of the junior college movement in this area, one is impressed with the fact that the leaders in the movement felt that one of the main objectives of such a junior college education was to prepare teachers for our Christian schools. Thus, when Dordt College was established, the teacher training program received careful attention. During the past five years, the College has diligently attempted to provide the best type of two year training for prospective teachers.

Dordt College has also attempted to help the school boards to locate the teachers they need. To do this work, Dordt College has set up a Teacher Placement Service which does everything in its power to bring school boards and prospective teachers together.

Each year at this time principals and school boards receive a list of the students who have completed the two year teacher training course and will be available for teaching next year. With this list the schools also receive complete instructions as to the interview arrangements which can be made at the College.

Beginning March 10, each school board has access to the Placement Service personal file of each student. These files contain information on academic records and personal recommendations. This information is available by mail or may be picked up at the College.

Between March 10 and April 1, school boards are given the opportunity to make appointments to interview candidates for teaching positions. The College office schedules these interviews and makes all necessary arrangements for interviewing facilities. Since National Union of Christian Schools policy states that contracts may not be granted to college students prior to April 1, this period should give each board ample opportunity to interview students.

Placement services are limited to students who have completed the two year teacher training program and have maintained at least a "C" average in all college work. It is the feeling of the faculty that we cannot recommend students with less than two years of college work or

those who do not have the "C" average.

In past years a number of Dordt students who have not been recommended by Dordt College (either because of poor grades or because of insufficient college training) have been given teaching positions. In the majority of these cases the school board did not see the academic record of the student before granting the contract. We have been told personally and in letters that some of these students were very poorly prepared and set very poor examples for their pupils. People ask us why we recommend such students. **Dordt College does not recommend these students.**

In situations where school boards, due to emergency conditions, consider hiring a student whom we do not recommend, we feel that it is essential that the student be requested to instruct the Dordt College Registrar to send a transcript of his records to the school. Only when these records are available can the school board determine whether the student is qualified academically to teach their children.

FINE ARTS PROGRAMS

On Friday evening, February 26, there was presented at our auditorium another Fine Arts Program. Both students and faculty cooperated in the production of an evening of amusing, relaxing, stimulating, and edifying entertainment. There were a comedy skit, madrigal singers, piano solo and duets, a mixed quartet, a girls' sextet, a brass choir, a male chorus, and the Dordt Choir itself. The proceeds were meant to help defray the expenses of the forthcoming spring choir tour.

We who are working here at the hub of the wheel that is Dordt are pleased to be able to bring this kind of entertainment to our people. We feel that such high caliber programs help to justify our existence. You see, we feel that the college has a singular mission to perform. It is a mission which is supplementary to the real work of the college—the intellectual, moral, and spiritual work done with the student in and about the classroom. This mission can well be called our cultural mission—or cultural mandate.

Now, it is most unfortunate, but when people start to talk about culture, there are many who suddenly grow cold to the conversation. They get restless, uneasy, and often either change the subject, walk away, or worse, stand off and deride the advocate of culture. Many think that to speak about or to seek cultural habits of mind and practice is to be

snooty, stand-offish, or better-than-thouish.

Let's admit that those who have presumed to be cultured have often been just that: presumptuous. But the man who genuinely seeks culture, the man who earnestly practices a life graced by certain refinements, is hardly a fit subject for derision. Those who deride the presumptuous ought to be praised for exposing folly; those who deride the genuine ought to know better.

Esprit de Corps

— Peter P. De Boer

For the Christian, the Reformed Christian, culture is all important. Our starting point is not that of the man of the world, not even the enlightened pagan. We do not start with the romantic notion of a good man made evil by environment; that our cultural mandate is therefore to correct evil institutions. We do not believe, as did Socrates and Plato (but not Aristotle) that to know

the good is necessarily to do the good. No, our starting point is man created in the image of God. We believe man to be a morally responsible creature, one who is duty bound to seek the good, the true, the beautiful. Man was placed in this world to have dominion. Man, the special object of God's grace, was made a prophet—one who seeks to know the truth, a priest—one who loves God, and King—one who is the subject (ruler) of the universe.

Now, if you are still listening, you may answer, "I agree. I've heard all this before. But what has this to do with Fine Arts Programs?" The answer is that we have these to help us to culture, refine, or redeem the time. The word *redeem* suggests such concepts as these: to regain possession, to resume or deliver, to fulfill. You see, we redeem student time by helping him engage his moments free from studies in good entertainment. We redeem your time by helping you engage some of your leisure in good entertainment. And in a profounder sense, we speak through Fine Arts Programs (and similar activities) to our age, our times. We say: you see, we Calvinists are not leading wholly negative lives. We do not swallow up our lives completely in self-denial. Ours is also a positive approach to the God glorifying life. We Calvinists can best shout with Paul, "All things are yours, if ye are Christ's."

"IN A COLLEGE CHAPEL"

"I am certain that all of us present here have at one time or another been shocked by the awful profanity used in our presence. Profanity is becoming a very general thing today. It seems that some people use it so 'matter-of-factly,' that they don't realize they are using it. If you would remind them of it they probably would be surprised to find out that they actually use it that much. It almost seems as if some people cannot talk without using profanity. Most people seem to have forgotten the command of God which says, 'Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah Thy God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless who taketh His name in vain.'

"In this third commandment God clearly prohibits all vain use of His name.***But by taking God's name in vain is not the only way we can sin against this commandment. We can also sin against this command of God by our silence. If we remain silent when we hear someone use profanity, we are sinning against this commandment just as much as the person using the profanity.***. . . I am almost certain that if you overheard someone talk-

ing about and saying untrue things about your best friend, you would not remain silent; you would defend your friend. If this is true of us toward our friends, and it should be, then surely it should be true of us toward our God if someone is using His name in vain.***There is still another way in which we sin against this commandment. That is by using God's name irreverently. By irreverently I (mean) . . . using God's name thoughtlessly.

"Let us always use God's name with respect, for God will tolerate no vain use of His name." (Clifford Vander Ley).

"Undoubtedly, all of us are familiar with the fact that ignorance is no excuse for the law. In fact, perhaps some of us have even found it out the 'hard way.'

"This morning I would like to present to you a problem in which ignorance is no excuse for the Lord.***It is the problem of the separation of Christian principles from our actions. In other words, we fail to put into practice those Christian concepts which are supposed to guide us in our everyday lives. ***

"This problem is not a new problem. Indeed, it was even present in Biblical times. ***

"It is a very serious problem. Although we know better, we still act contrary to God's commands. Therefore, we reap judgments upon ourselves—a judgment which according to the passage from Jeremiah (chapter 9) is very severe.***

". . . It seems to me that the basic cause lies in each of us as individuals. Often we fail to assimilate Christian principles . . . because our religion isn't a personal religion. We know the doctrinal facts but fail to make them a part of us. We are clothed with the cloak of eternal religion and yet we don't possess an internal vital religion.

"Therefore it is up to each of us to make our Christianity living. Christ must gain complete possession of our lives and become a dynamic force within us. Our religion must be a personal religion clutching our soul. Only then will we achieve the union of Christian principles with our everyday actions and only then can we practice true Christian living." (Edward Blankespoor)